

award of valor, as well as the design of the award itself. I direct you to report back to me with this plan within 30 days.

All Americans can feel pride in the work done each and every day by those who promise to protect and serve. It is my hope that with the creation of this award of valor the efforts of public safety officers are more publicly recognized and appreciated by our Nation.

William J. Clinton

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision Striking Down a Provision of the Violence Against Women Act

May 15, 2000

I am deeply disappointed by the Supreme Court's decision today in *United States v. Morrison*. In this case, the Court struck down the civil remedy provision contained in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). In 1994, as part of comprehensive crime control legislation, I signed into law the Violence Against Women Act. This historic, important piece of Federal legislation contains a broad array of groundbreaking laws to combat violence against women. VAWA passed Congress with bipartisan support.

The Supreme Court's decision today does not affect the viability of VAWA as a whole. It does not affect any of the VAWA grant programs nor does it affect Federal criminal provisions that punish interstate domestic violence and stalking crimes. The Supreme Court did, however, invalidate one important provision of the Violence Against Women Act that gave victims of gender-motivated violence the ability to sue their attackers for lost earnings, medical expenses, and other damages. Because I continue to believe that there should be remedies for victims of gender-motivated violence, we plan to study the Supreme Court's decision in *Morrison* to determine the best means to help these victims.

VAWA has provided funds to communities across the Nation to address the tragedy of violence against women. These funds have made a crucial difference in women's lives. Unfortunately, VAWA funding is only authorized until the end of fiscal year 2000. I have made the reauthorization and strengthening

of VAWA a top legislative goal for this year. If we work together, we can enact a bill that will keep women in this country safe from violence.

Proclamation 7308—National Defense Transportation Day and National Transportation Week, 2000

May 15, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Throughout the past century, America's national transportation system has played a crucial role in strengthening our economy, protecting our safety, and improving the quality of life for all Americans. Interconnecting networks of railroads, ports, and waterways have transported millions of passengers and billions of dollars' worth of freight. Our national highway system connected cities to rural communities and people to jobs. The Wright Brothers' invention of the airplane gave birth to a world-class aviation system that revolutionized travel, created new industries, and brought the nations of the world closer. The quality and versatility of all these modes of transportation gave our Nation a powerful defense tool as well, enabling us to move troops and materiel swiftly and efficiently in times of conflict and crisis. Now, as we begin a new century, our national transportation system must embrace exciting new possibilities and new challenges.

One of the most important of those challenges is safety. Advances in technology offer us great hope for progress in reducing accidents and fatalities. For example, the Federal Aviation Administration is working in partnership with the airline industry, pilots, technicians, and air traffic controllers to use improved forecasting and new communications technology to detect severe weather sooner, to let pilots and passengers know promptly about anticipated delays, and to centralize air traffic decisionmaking during severe storms in order to reduce delays. Automobile manufacturers are also using new technologies and design innovations—from stronger metals to new safety lights to advanced brake technology—to prevent accidents and save lives.

Another of our great transportation challenges is to develop alternative fuels and clean energy sources that will not harm our environment. Earlier this year, I signed an Executive Order to ensure the Federal Government's leadership in reducing petroleum consumption and promoting the use of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs). By developing and using AFVs, we can reduce greenhouse gases and other pollutants, enhance our Nation's energy self-sufficiency by reducing the demand for imported oil, and create new products and jobs.

If we make wise and informed choices today and in the years to come, we can make our communities more livable, give our citizens greater choice and mobility, protect our environment, and help create a truly global community. The 20th century was indeed a golden age for transportation; the 21st century can be an even brighter one.

In recognition of the importance of our Nation's transportation system to our national security and economic health, and in honor of the many dedicated men and women who have ensured its continued excellence through the years, the United States Congress, by joint resolution approved May 16, 1957 (36 U.S.C. 120), has designated the third Friday in May of each year as "National Defense Transportation Day" and, by joint resolution approved May 14, 1962 (36 U.S.C. 133), declared that the week during which that Friday falls be designated "National Transportation Week."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 19, 2000, as National Defense Transportation Day and May 14 through May 20, 2000, as National Transportation Week. I urge all Americans to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 18, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 19.

Remarks Honoring the 1999 Women's National Basketball Association Champion Houston Comets

May 15, 2000

The President. Please be seated. Good afternoon, and welcome to the Rose Garden. I want to thank the Marine Brass for playing for us and bringing us in, and also thank three Members from the Texas delegation for being here: Representative Ken Bentsen, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, and Representative Gene Green, thank you for coming.

I want to welcome the president of the WNBA, Val Ackerman; Coach Chancellor; and Leslie and Nanci Alexander. And I know we have all the team here. Sheryl Swoopes was here in April of 1993 with the Lady Raiders of Texas Tech. How about that? I remember that.

And I want to say a special word of welcome to Loretta Perrot, sister of Kim Perrot. I know we're all glad that she's here with the team today, and I welcome her.

We have a lot of other distinguished athletes and sports figures in the crowd today, as well as some students from Ben Murch Elementary School, the DC city public school champions. Welcome.

Today we're here to celebrate the team that refuses to lose, the Houston Comets. Three years ago I had the privilege of speaking with your team after you had won the first championship, the first in WNBA history. In 1998 you took the crown again. And this season, with your victory over the Liberty, you're at the top again, joining the ranks of Bill Russell's Celtics and Michael Jordan's Bulls, becoming only the fourth franchise in the history of basketball to win three titles in a row. I have—yes, give them another hand. *[Applause]* That's good.

Some of you may know, I'm a modestly fanatic basketball fan, and I follow the WNBA every season. And I am delighted by the continuing progress in both the great quality of play and the enthusiasm of the